
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Executive Directive No. 7 (2013)

Comprehensive, Coordinated State Response to the Problem of Human Trafficking

As the chief executive officer for the Commonwealth of Virginia, I hereby issue this Executive Directive to the Executive Branch Cabinet members, agency heads, managers, supervisors, and employees in order to provide a comprehensive, coordinated state response to the problem of human trafficking in Virginia. Nothing in this Executive Directive should be construed as imposing an unfunded mandate on any Independent or non-Executive branch agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Human trafficking is a serious problem with often tragic consequences for its victims. It is one of the fastest growing criminal enterprises in the world and there are estimates that as many as 27 million people worldwide, many of them children, are trapped in what amounts to slavery. As many as 25,000 people are estimated to be living in slavery in the United States, and the U.S. Justice Department reports that trafficking has occurred in almost every state, including Virginia. The National Human Trafficking Resource Center reports a 61% increase in calls to its Human Trafficking Hotline between 2010 and 2011. Sex trafficking accounts for the majority of the calls from Virginia.

In recent years, Virginia has made great progress in creating a legal framework for investigating human trafficking and prosecuting those engaged in it. This has been augmented by the creation earlier this year of the Human Trafficking Workgroup under the direction of the Secretary of Public Safety. That group, consisting of representatives of the state agencies with statutory responsibilities related to combating human trafficking, has developed both short and long-term recommendations and strategies for coordinating and strengthening the Commonwealth's response to human trafficking. These are stated in the report, "Laying the Foundation for Virginia's Coordinated Response to Human Trafficking."

Maintaining the Commonwealth's focus on human trafficking and coordination of state agencies' efforts to implement the Workgroup's recommendations, while identifying additional responses to the problem, are of great importance to Virginia. Accordingly, I direct that:

1. The Secretary of Public Safety, in collaboration with other Cabinet Secretaries convene an Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinating Committee composed of representatives of: the Departments of Criminal Justice Services, State Police, Education, Social Services, Health, Health Professions, Agriculture and Consumer Services, Alcoholic Beverage Control, Behavioral Health and Developmental Services; Professional and Occupational Regulation; Transportation; and the Virginia Employment Commission, with an invitation extended to the Office of the Attorney General.
The Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinating Committee shall meet regularly to review and coordinate the agencies' work to implement the recommendations in "Laying the Foundation for Virginia's Coordinated Response to Human Trafficking," and to identify additional actions and strategies to further strengthen the Commonwealth's responses to human trafficking.
2. The Departments of Criminal Justice Services, State Police, Education, Social Services, Health, Health Professions., Agriculture and Consumer Services, Alcoholic Beverage Control, Labor and Industry, Professional and Occupational Regulation, Transportation, Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the Virginia Employment Commission take steps to broaden the availability of information and materials related to human trafficking via their websites.
3. The Departments of Criminal Justice Services, State Police, Education, Social Services, Health, Health Professions., Agriculture and Consumer Services, Alcoholic Beverage Control, Labor and Industry, Professional and Occupational Regulation, Transportation, Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the Virginia Employment Commission each designate at least one person be the primary point of contact on matters related to human trafficking and to serve on the Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinating Committee.
4. Notices regarding the National Runaway Safeline and National Human Trafficking Hotline be posted in state parks, state-run highway rest areas and visitor centers, and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles offices.
5. All agencies should examine areas of public access to determine whether posting notices regarding the National Runaway Safeline and the National Human Trafficking Hotline would provide useful information to the public, and if so, to post such notices.
6. Agencies should review existing funding programs for barriers that may prohibit human trafficking victims from accessing services, and seek potential solutions to any such barriers. The following areas will be reviewed: a) emergency and transitional housing; b) mental health and substance abuse; c) victim advocacy and services; and d) transportation assistance.

Janet V. Kelly, Secretary of the Commonwealth